



San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD
Director of Health

City and County of San Francisco
London N. Breed
Mayor

Director's Report for Health Commission Meeting of January 18, 2022

A current overview of issues affecting the state of public health in San Francisco

<https://www.dph.org/dph/comupg/aboutdph/insideDept/dirRpts/default.asp>

Today, there are over 80,300 San Francisco residents with confirmed cases of COVID-19. And, sadly, a total of 694 San Franciscans have died. The San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) sends our condolences to their loved ones.

SF issues new COVID-19 testing guidelines for health care providers

On January 11, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health Dr. Grant Colfax announced new COVID-19 testing guidelines for large healthcare providers like hospitals and hospital-affiliated systems to meet current demands and help minimize the impact of the Omicron-fueled surge. The new guidelines build on the City's testing order issued August 19, 2021, which is being revised by the Health Officer this week, requiring all large health care facilities to provide access to COVID-19 testing for people with symptoms and people who have been a close contact within 24 hours of a request from a member patient.

San Francisco officials also announced more support for the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), including providing more masks for students and educators, and adding to the District supply of rapid antigen tests to support educators who are in quarantine being able to test back into the classroom. These efforts are on top of SFUSD's work to expand testing support for both students and staff.

Under the new Mayoral Order, the largest health systems—meaning those that own or operate a hospital—will now be required to produce documentation twice a week to DPH with proof of meeting patient testing needs in a timely manner. Failure to comply with the Mayoral Order may result in fines imposed by the City and County of San Francisco of up to \$10,000 per day.

With more than 10,000 individuals tested daily in San Francisco, this Order will help to slow transmission and keep schools, hospitals, homeless shelters, and other essential services operating. Since the beginning of the pandemic, SFDPH has been the largest provider of COVID-19 tests in the City. SFDPH testing sites have been running at 500-900% of capacity since the current surge began.

While 81% of San Franciscans are vaccinated, and 58% of vaccinated residents have been boosted, the highly contagious Omicron-variant is still able to spread as breakthrough infections. This is impacting the City's delivery of essential services and creating a strain on the public health system.

Mayor Breed and SFDPH continue to reaffirm that schools have been low-risk settings with the



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proper safety protocols in place and that even with the certainty of additional cases, the mental health and educational impacts on students due to social isolation far outweigh the challenges of in-person learning. The City is working directly with SFUSD to provide a first series of 1,000 rapid tests to help educators test after quarantine to return to the classroom. The City is also providing 500,000 surgical masks for students, and 150,000 KN95 masks for staff.

SFUSD is currently providing mobile rapid testing to students returning from winter break, in addition to SFDPH testing sites and the District's ongoing Color testing program. Students are also receiving take-home rapid test kits supplied by the California Department of Public Health. For more information on testing for SFUSD students, please visit [here](#).

New actions underway in the Tenderloin, including linkage center

The City has entered into a lease for a new Linkage Center as part of its Tenderloin Emergency Initiative. This new Linkage Center is a services-focused location where people can voluntarily find respite from the streets and gain access to a wide variety of resources from the City and its partners.

The Linkage Center, authorized under the powers of the State of Emergency Declaration, is scheduled to open by January, which is months sooner than if the Declaration had not existed. Other initiatives under the Emergency Declaration are also underway, including expediting the hiring of behavioral health clinicians to support people suffering from substance use disorder in the Tenderloin.

Linkage Center Details

The purpose of this Center is to be a safe, welcoming location for people who suffer from substance use disorder in the Tenderloin where they can access hygiene resources and social space as well as to provide a single location for those who are ready to access city health and human services to link to those programs easily and quickly. The location will be a building leased at 1170 Market Street, including both inside and outside space and security.

Food, water, hygiene supplies, dignity services, and social space will be available at the Center. The Linkage Center will also include staff and referrals into programs including:

- Behavioral health care and treatment
- Temporary winter shelter
- Transitional housing
- Homeward bound
- Sobering / substance use treatment
- Food coordination
- Vocational support
- Therapy and mentoring
- Child and family care



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Individuals can self-present to the Center or arrive via vehicle or foot escort by a community partner. If police encounter people on the street who may benefit from this Center, officers can call upon a health or social services partner to provide more information and an escort to the site.

The Center will be staffed by peer and community practitioners and is expected to open in mid-January. The site will ramp up to 24/7, but initial hours of operation depend on impacts from the current surge of COVID-19. Capacity will be up to 100 guests plus staff.

San Franciscans urged to get boosted and lower their risk exposure

With the Omicron-fueled surge propelling the City to its highest COVID-19 rates since the start of the pandemic, Mayor London N. Breed and Director of Health, Dr. Grant Colfax are urging San Franciscans to layer their defenses, including taking reasonable measures to lower their risk exposure to the virus where possible to slow transmission and keep schools, hospitals, homeless shelters, and other essential services operating. Additional City resources are being deployed, and health safety measures implemented in response to the surge to minimize the impact.

While 81% of San Franciscans are vaccinated, and 59% of vaccinated residents have been boosted, the highly contagious Omicron-variant is still able to spread as breakthrough infections, often asymptomatically or with mild illness. This raises the prospects that frontline workers could become infected and be temporarily unable to work, impacting the City's delivery of essential services.

While hospitalization rates are expected to be lower with Omicron, the sheer number of people getting infected means San Francisco is experiencing increased demand for hospital beds at a time when staff is also contracting the virus because of high community spread.

San Francisco's priority right now is to protect essential services and the most vulnerable populations. SFPD is currently conducting about half of all COVID-19 tests in the City and is prioritizing disaster service workers and symptomatic individuals for testing. SFPD has also ordered test kits from suppliers to support first responders and the most vulnerable, such as residents and staff of skilled nursing facilities.

Some of the City's other efforts include:

- Expanded hours and additional appointments and drop-ins for vaccinations and boosters at SFPD-affiliated and health systems partner sites, including mobile pop-up events at schools and focused efforts on reaching all long-term care facilities and senior housing in San Francisco.
- Coordinating with other healthcare systems across the City to support SFPD hospital systems and to further expand testing and vaccine hours.
- Updates to San Francisco's Safer Return Together health order requiring boosters for health



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care workers and in other high-risk settings, and temporarily suspending the mask exemption for limited settings like offices and gyms to lower the chance of spread among groups of vaccinated people.

- Limiting the number of visitors and requiring on-site testing at skilled nursing facilities.
- New safety protocol at homeless shelters that enable the continuation of services by grouping residents based on COVID-19 status.

With children returning to school after the holiday break, SFDPH reaffirms that schools have been low-risk settings with the proper safety protocols in place and that even with the certainty of additional cases, the mental health and educational impacts on students due to social isolation far outweigh the challenges of in-person learning.

Residents can do many things to protect themselves and their community and lower the level of risk exposure in households. Consider taking additional measures during times of high transmission, such as getting vaccinated/boosted, upgrading masks, working from home if possible, or limiting time spent in crowded, indoor settings.

How to stay safe:

- Have everyone ages 5+ get their COVID-19 vaccine and booster if eligible.
- Anyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 should isolate themselves and get tested as soon as possible.
- Get tested before travel, upon return, and again 3-5 days later.
- Take advantage of quick and easy home test kits available in pharmacies and stores.
- Outside gatherings are safer than indoor gatherings. Limit the number and size of indoor gatherings.
- Take all precautions, including vaccinations, boosters, and testing when gathering with others without masks – especially with elderly or immunocompromised individuals, and anyone who is unvaccinated or not yet boosted.
- Wear a well-fitted mask indoors and in crowded settings. To best protect yourself, wear an N95 or double mask with a cloth mask over a surgical mask to improve the seal. If possible, avoid wearing only a cloth mask during this surge.
- Unvaccinated adults should avoid travel and gatherings outside their household.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer often.
- Layer your defenses, and reduce your household's risk exposure during periods of high transmission, like the current omicron surge.

What to do if you test positive for COVID:

Individuals who test positive, including if they are asymptomatic, should assume they are infected with COVID-19 and take measures to get care and isolate away from others. Additionally, they should notify their healthcare provider about their positive test result and stay in contact with them during their illness. Individuals who do not have a provider or need assistance with isolation can



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connect with the SFDPH COVID Resource Center at (628) 217-6101.

More information about what to do if you test positive [can be found here](#).

Other COVID-19 resources:

- Isolation and Quarantine guidelines can be found here: <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/COVID-19/Isolation-and-Quarantine.asp>
- For a list of testing sites in San Francisco, go to: sf.gov/gettested
- For a list of vaccination and booster sites in San Francisco, go to: sf.gov/getvaccinated
- More SF COVID data can be found here: sf.gov/resource/2021/covid-19-data-and-reports

DPH Environmental Health Branch responds to unpermitted food vending in Union Square

In late November 2021, it was brought to the attention of the Environmental Health Branch (EHB) that there was a large number of unpermitted food carts operating in the Union Square area. Food carts operating without a permit may be providing unhealthy food to the public which made this issue a health priority. From December 1st through 13th, 2021, EHB sent our bilingual inspectors to provide educational materials and instructions around how to operate legally. After providing outreach and educational materials for two weeks, EHB pivoted from an education first approach to enforcement. Enforcement has involved issuing citations and impounding the illegal carts. EHB coordinated with the Department of Public Works, who provided a crew/truck for impounding the carts and SFPD who provided security. These taskforce inspections have been occurring every weekend since December 17th, 2021. During this time, EHB has cited and impounded around 10 food carts found to be operating without a permit in this area. Many more unpermitted carts have voluntarily left the area. EHB has also met with staff from the Office of Economic Workforce Development and the Mission Economic Development Agency to discuss possible assistance for helping these vendors operate legally. Going into 2022, EHB will continue to work with these groups and other city partners in trying to find a long term and lasting solution to this public health issue. Terry Hong is the EHB manager in charge of the mobile food program and has done an outstanding job coordinating this project. Thank you, Terry!

[DPH in the News](#)



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SAN FRANCISCO HEALTH NETWORK ZUCKERBERG SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL & TRAUMA CENTER

December 2021

Governing Body Report - Credentialing Summary (12/16/21 MEC)

	12/2021	07/2021 to 07/2022
New Appointments	11	95
Reinstatements	0	0
Reappointments	44	285
Delinquencies:		
Reappointment Denials:		
Resigned/Retired:	17	96
Disciplinary Actions		
Administrative Suspension		
Restriction/Limitation-Privileges		
Deceased		
Changes in Privileges		
Voluntary Relinquishments	8	57
Additions	8	55
Proctorship Completed	9	91

Current Statistics – as of 12/1/21

Active Staff	551
Courtesy Staff	640
Affiliated Professionals (non-physicians)	299
TOTAL MEMBERS	1,490

Applications in Process	28
Applications Withdrawn Month of December 2021	0
SFGH Reappointments in Process 1/1/22 to 3/31/22	134